

WEEKLY DENTAL UPDATE



SPECIAL EDITION

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PASSING OF CAPTAIN JAMES T. MELLONIG DC, USN (RET)

Shipmates, it is with deep regret that I inform you of the passing of Captain James T. Mellonig, DC, USN (ret).

CAPT Mellonig died peacefully in his home in Mico, TX at the age of 79 on November 16, 2021. After he received his D.D.S. from Marquette University in 1969, he entered the U.S Navy's Dental Corps to spend a highly productive 20-year career. Tours of duty included NDC Norfolk, VA; USS Shenandoah (AD-26); BDC; Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico; NDC; NRDC, Great Lakes, IL. Three tours of duty were particularly defining: First, in 1972-1974, he was trained in the speciality of Periodontics at the National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda MD, concurrently earning an M.S. in Oral Biology from the George Washington University. Second, Dr Mellonig was also stationed at the Naval Medical Research Institute in Bethesda MD in a full time research capacity. It was a fortuitous assignment as the Navy Tissue Bank was on this same compound which would become the model for future institutional tissue banking. Dr Mellonig combined his interest in periodontal regeneration with this facility's bone banking expertise to yield a seminal series of investigations into the use of bone allografts for periodontal regenerative therapy. This would be a continual career long pursuit. Third, his final Navy assignment was as Chairman of the Navy's Residency Program in Periodontics at the National Naval Dental Center, Bethesda MD, reflecting his lifetime dedication to the mentoring and education of future periodontists for not only the Navy but the USAF, University of Maryland, and University of Texas. His military awards include the Navy Defense Service Medal, Meritorious Unit Commendation and the Navy and Marine Overseas Service Ribbon.



Upon his retirement from the Navy In 1989, he joined the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio faculty as Chairman of the residency program in the Department of Periodontics Graduate Division, retiring as a tenured professor in 2011. Over his professional lifetime, he received nearly all of the most prestigious award recognitions by the American Academy of Periodontology and Implantology possible including the Earl Robinson Periodontal Regeneration Award, the Research Award in Clinical Periodontology, the William Gies Periodontology Award, the Presidential Award, the Gold Medal Award, the Outstanding Periodontal Educator Award and the Master Clinician Award. This array of recognition speaks to an incredibly broad spectra of expertise and respect by his fellow peers in education, research and clinical mastery. Additionally, Dr Mellonig served in major leadership roles with the honor of being elected to Directorship of the American Board of Periodontology and then President of the American Academy of Periodontology. He was board certified in both the specialties of Periodontics and the American Board of Oral Medicine. Dr Mellonig's publication history numbered over 150 manuscripts, book chapters and texts. He was an oft requested speaker in some 400 prestigious national and international venues over his lifetime.

He is survived by his devoted and loving wife of 53 years, Karen and his children, Amy (Au.D.), Kimberly and Timothy Mellonig and his siblings, Thomas J. Mellonig (Nancy) and Judy Edwards.

CAPT Mellonig's legacies will be numerous: notable publications, a regenerative research award, impactful leadership, but foremost will be his mentorship and dedication to the residents from both military and civilian programs he guided over so many decades.

Rest in Peace Captain Mellonig.

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